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Three *Inhumane*
MURTHERS,

Committed

By one Bloody Person,
UPON

His *Father*, his *Mother*, and his *Wife*,
at *Cank in Staffordshire*.

And the Manner how he Acted this Bloody Tragedy.

Together with

His *Examination, Confession, Condemna-*
tion, and Execution.

At the General Assises held at *Stafford*
the 13th day of *March* last past, 1675.

ALSO

His *Deportment and Behaviour* both at
his Tryal, and Place of Execution.

With Allowance.

London, Printed for H. E. M D C L X X V.

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Great is the Charge and Care (undoubtedly) which lies upon Parents for the well Educating their Children, as is expressly Commanded by Solomon, saying, *Train up a Child in the way that he should go, and when he is Old he will not depart from it,*

Prov. 22.6. The want of which good Education, is too often occasioned by the Parents dying in their Childrens Minority, leaving them to the wide World, and the too much freedom of their own Wills; which too often proves the Ruine and Destruction of many a Good Mans Child: As it fared here with an Unhappy young Man, who lived in Cank in Staffordshire, the Subject of our present Discourse.

His Parentage is very well known to be Honest and Credible; but his Father dying in his Sons minority, was the cause of a too loose Education. And we daily see, That where Youth gets the head, their Age is trodden under foot, and becomes despicable: As it was here with our Misfortunate Young Man.

About a Year past, he was a pretended Servant to an Honest Mans Daughter living in Cark aforesaid, who was the only child of her Parents, (hoping thereby to advance himself by their Substance, though in his heart he loved another better) but they not agreeing, he went and lived in several Services; but by his flashing, lying and Prodigality living above himself, (which is the Ruine of many) he could not stay long in any Service; so that he was reduc'd to a very low and sad Condition; insomuch, that he thought it best to renew his former Suit to this Honest Old Mans Daughter, who still retain'd a True Affection for him; the Poor Soul not perceiving his Crocodile Nature. The Old People to satisfy their Daughter, consented, and match'd her to him, and taking him into the House to them, loved him as if he had been their own child; But he growing Belly-proud, and Prodigal, being like Aesop's Snake, wuxt Warm, stung to deaht those which had saved his life.

And as Pride and Luxury cannot contain it self within the Bounds of Modesty, so it fared with our Young Man; who being acquainted with a Woman living not far from Ch'stenbay, of a very bad Reputation among her Neighbours, to this Woman he often resorted after his Marriage, (whether it were for any former Kindness which he had for her Daughter, who formerly had been a fellow-Servant with him; or whether her Daughter had been an Interceder between him and his Sweet-Heart before spoken of, is not certainly known; But it happened one day, he being out with his Father-in-Law's Team in the Hay to fetch Coals, a young Youth

Youth (Grand-Child to his Father-in-Law) being with him, he called at this Womans House, who asking *what Boy that was* ; He told her : Whereupon it was contrived presently, and put into his mind to Poyson that Boy, his Wife, his Father-in-law, and his Mother-in-law, and then all that they had would be his own. After which Counsel (as he confessed before the Coroners Inquest) he could not rest Day nor Night till he had brought to passe this *Horrid and Devillish Act* ; To which purpose, upon the 15th day of January last, he makes a Fatal Journey to a Tovvn called *Panckrich*, about 3. miles distant, to buy this Instrument of death, a Pennyvorth of *Arsenick* or *Ratsbane* ; vvhich quantity he was told vwould be enough.

Where coming into a Mercers Shop, he asked for this Commodity by the name of *Arsenick* or *Ratsbane* ; The Shopkeeper told him, *He had none of that Commodity* ; but jestingly said, *If he would buy either Brandy or Tobacco be had some to sell him*. At which time a Gentleman living not far distant, happened to be in the said Shop ; To whom the Shop-Keeper after the young man's departure said, *This Fellow looks as if he would Poyson himself* ; and asked the Gentleman if he knew him ? Who said, *He knew him very well* ; for he had formerly been a *Domestick Servant of his Fathers*. But this man going to another shop in the same Town, bought this Instrument of Wickedness, and upon the *Sunday* following put his Devillish Purpose in Execution. The manner how he acted this *Tragical Story* was thus :

He took a part of this Ingredient and put into a Dish of Milk, intended and prepared for the *Grand-Child* ;
but

but the Boy not coming home time enough after Evening Prayer, (being at play vwith other Boyes) the young Woman his Wife made a Toste and put it into the *Miss of Milk*, (it being a usual Dish in that House) and taking the milk set by for the Boy, as aforesaid, she began to eat, her Husband being present; When she had eaten about the one half, her Husband went forth into the Barn; from whence returning speedily, being frightened by a Black Dogg vvhich fastned suddenly upon him, and running into the House fetches a Night-Cap, and sits down by his Wife, who was still eating of the poysoned milk, and pretends a sudden sicknes, but indeed terribly affrighted, his Conscience flying in his face: Suddenly his Wife fell desperately ill, and both Vomited and Purged; and so she continued all night, till about 5 a clock on *Munday* morning, at what time she dyed; who before her departure demonstrated a great deal of Love and Affection to her Husband, who most Inhumanely (as is believed) continued giving her Potion in all things she took in the Night. The *Mother-in-law* dyed suddenly, but whether she were poysoned or not, it could not then be proved, neither would he confess any thing as to that. The *Father-in-law* dyed upon the *Wednesday*, having his deadly Potion given him in Posset-Drink, by his said Son in law, s he confessed. But both the Old man and his Wife vvere much troubled with Vomiting and Purging after the same sort as the Wife had done. Upon the *Thursday* all the Three Corps were Interred in *Cank Church-Yard* together, the said Son in law being all this while unspected.

The Strangeness and suddenness of the death of this whole Family, was that day the table-discourse at a Feast some two miles distant where the aforesaid Gentleman (that was in the Mercers shop, when the said *Nathaniel* the son in law called for the Poison) was a Guest, who calling to mind that such a Person was inquiring for Poyson, at *Panckrich* the *Friday* before, suspected that which afterwards proved too true: the said Gentleman dispatches a letter forthwith to a brother in law of his, to inform him of his suspicion and his reason therefore: which Brother in law, upon Sight of this letter informed some of the persons of Quality in the Town, who immediately apprehended the said *Nathaniel* upon suspicion, who at the first denied, but at last confessed all that hath been before related.

Another passage I cannot omit, but must needs give you the truth of it, which is thus.

After his Apprehension, before he confessed any thing of the woman aforesaid, as being the Counsellor and Contriver of this wicked fact, he was taken about the middle of the Night, with an *Exstasie* or Fit insomuch that his keepers thought he had poysoned himself; but recovering, he confessed, That, that naughty woman had bewitched him to commit this horrid fact; after which Confession, he fell into another *Exstasie*, in which his Tongue was thrust out, and so continued black and Swelled out of his mouth, insomuch that they could by no means thrust it nor keep it in, which seemed a sad Spectale to all the Standers by.

Upon this the Woman was apprehended, & brought to Town, about Nine a Clock on *Friday* morning, and news

news being brought him that she was within Ten Score of, the place where he was, his tongue returned of it self into his mouth ; and Fixing his eye with a fierce Countenance on the door, by which she was to enter, he fell down upon his Knees, and Pray'd God to forgive him all his Sins ; as soon as the Woman was entred the room, he made fiercely at her, and it is verily believed would have killed her, had he not been kept off, uttering these words, O thou base woman, thou hast utterly undone my poor Soul, and brought a disgrace upon my friends and relations. Upon the said *Friday*, the Coroner and his Jury sent for a Chirurgion, and caused the dead bodies to be taken up and dissected, in all whose Stomachs was found poysen, but most in the young woman his wife. He confessed all to the Jury, and did aver before them, that he was Counsellel to do it by that wicked woman : but she utterly denied all that he alledged against her. There was also another man, who coming to see his Uncle the old man aforesaid, who happening unawares to drink some of that deadly posset-drink which was left, by which his uncle had received his death, went home sick immediately, & it is thought would have died, but that an honest neighbour, went presently the same night it was known, and gave him Sallet-Oyl and other things, so by that means, and the help of Doctors, he is like to recover ; but the poison broke forth with botches and boils.

The Murderer and the woman aforesaid, were committed to *Stafford* Goal, where they lay from that time till the Assizes, in order to their Trial, which was on *Saturday* the 13th. of this instant *March*, 1674. Who were then called and Arraigned before the Judges at the Assizes holden at *Stafford*, but he would answer to nothing, nor was heard to say any thing but onely that hee would be try'd by God ; upon which the Judge Caul'd his Thumbs to be ty'd fast together with whipcord, and likewise his fingers, and so conveyed to the Goal ; upon the *Monday* following several times he was called before the Judge, but would not answer to any thing, likewise upon *Tuesday* he was Called, but would not plead, insomuch that Sentence past upon him, and the same day he was pressed, being very willing to dye, freely acknowledging that he had deserved it. He was very penitent ; yet went with Courage down stairs to the place appointed for Execution, undresed himself presently and layd himself down willingly (without any Compulsion) for the Executioner to do his Office, which was done accordingly.

FINIS.

